

EXHIBIT 4
DATE 2/10/09
HB 2

Memorandum

TO: The Honorable Representative Galen Hollenbaugh, Chair
Natural Resources and Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee

FROM: Ron de Yong, Director, Department of Agriculture *Ron de Yong*
Joe Maurier, Director, Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks *Joe Maurier*
Christian Mackay, Executive Officer, Department of Livestock *Christian Mackay*

DATE: February 6, 2009

RE: **Budget Supplement – Invasive Species**

Preventing the introduction of new invasive species in Montana is critical. Attached is the additional information requested by the subcommittee on statewide coordination of invasive species programs.

The resources available in HB 2 will be effectively and efficiently utilized by the departments of Agriculture, Fish Wildlife and Parks, and Livestock to coordinate efforts and establish a statewide strategic plan with or without the passage of SB 343.

We are available to answer any questions you may have and appreciate your consideration of the invasive species proposals outlined in decision packages 301 and 3005.

Natural Resources & Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee

2011 Biennium Budget Supplement

Invasive Species

February 2009

Protecting Montana against invasive species is important to our economy, environment, recreational opportunities, and human health. The departments of Agriculture (AGR), Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP), and Livestock (DOL) are responsible for combating invasive species. The departments have well developed and functioning structures in place. AGR deals with weeds and agricultural pests and diseases; FWP with aquatic nuisance species and exotic animal importation; and DOL with livestock pests and diseases and livestock wildlife interfaces.

The most cost-effective way of dealing with an invasive species is to prevent an infestation from occurring. The existing structure has gaps in authority necessary to effectively prevent, respond to, control, and manage invasive species. Funding limitations restrict prevention and containment efforts. We need the resources requested in HB 2, to coordinate statewide strategic planning, promote education awareness, and conduct preventative activities. The three directors will coordinate use of these resources. The directors will hire staff and establish a steering committee comprised of public and private stakeholders with expertise in invasive species. AGR will house the invasive species coordinator and take a leadership role in working with the directors and the steering committee to ensure transparency and participation.

These existing structures have been traditionally funded through department base budgets. However, due to loss of federal resources, FWP is requesting approximately \$166,000 per year in HB 2, decision package 301 (C-24), to maintain the existing aquatic nuisance species program. New one time only funding of \$333,500 per year is requested by AGR through decision package 3005 (C-310) to build upon the existing structures of the three agencies through coordination of a state strategic plan that increases educational, preventative, and containment activities. These activities include public awareness media campaigns, training and education events, and check stations using portable self contained wash units.

In summary, the directors of AGR, FWP, and DOL support a coordinated effort and will utilize the existing structure of the Noxious Weed Summit Advisory Council which includes federal and tribal representation with additional expertise to advise them on invasive species efforts. The directors respectfully request approval of HB 2 funding for both the FWP decision package 301 to support the funding needs of the existing aquatic nuisance species program and AGR decision package 3005 to prevent the introduction of and to respond to the presence of invasive species in the state of Montana.